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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 000861

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DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, EAP/RSP; NSC FOR E.PHU

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SUBJECT: AFTER MUCH JOCKEYING, THREE TICKETS TO COMPETE IN  
JULY PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

REF: JAKARTA 00852 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph L. Novak, reasons 1.4(b+d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: Three pairs of candidates have officially registered by the May 16 deadline as contenders in the July presidential elections. President Yudhoyono will team up with former Central Bank Governor Boediyono. Vice President Jusuf Kalla linked up with General (ret'd) Wiranto. Former president Megawati Sukarnoputri, meanwhile, waited until the last minute to choose General (ret'd) Prabowo Subianto. Both Prabowo and Wiranto, controversial for past human rights abuses, originally nurtured presidential ambitions. Yudhoyono is way ahead in the polls at this point. END SUMMARY.

#### THE THREE CONTENDERS

12. (U) The fierce political jockeying for presidential and vice-presidential bids came to an end on May 16 as three sets of candidates met the deadline to register for the July 8 elections. According to the law, the Elections Commission has until May 20 to verify the registration information, at which point the tickets will be considered valid. Per the Indonesian Constitution, the three teams underwent health exams May 17 to prove that they are healthy enough to serve. (Note: Indonesian law stipulates that between May 28 to June 6 parties may withdraw and/or replace their presidential and vice-presidential candidates, but this seems unlikely.) The tickets are:

-- President Yudhoyono, leader of Partai Demokrat (PD), and former Central Bank Governor Boediyono (one name only; see reftel). (Note: In accordance with the law, Boediyono resigned his Central Bank position on May 15 to accept the vice-presidential candidacy. He is officially non-partisan.)

--Vice President and Golkar Party Chair Jusuf Kalla and retired general Wiranto (one name only) of the People's Conscience Party (Hanura).

--Megawati Sukarnoputri, leader of the opposition Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), and retired general Prabowo Subianto, head of the Gerindra Party.

#### YUDHOYONO AND KALLA COALITIONS

13. (SBU) President Yudhoyono's PD party formed a coalition with 23 other parties, including the four main Muslim-based parties. All 23, including the Islamic-oriented Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), agreed to support the Yudhoyono-Boediyono team in the election and, if it wins, in government. The PD coalition encompasses parties which received over 50% of the vote in the legislative elections. VP Kalla's coalition is basically made up of the Golkar and

Hanura parties. It is built on a much smaller base of support than Yudhoyono's coalition as indicated by the April legislative election results.

#### AT LAST MINUTE, MEGAWATI ALLIES WITH FORMER GENERAL

14. (C) Megawati waited until the last minute to register Prabowo as her vice-presidential candidate pick. Prabowo, who along with Wiranto aspired to be president, agreed to be on Megawati's ticket only after a protracted negotiation in which he asked for a majority of Cabinet positions if she won the election. She agreed to give Gerindra a large number (but not the majority) of Cabinet positions and to give Prabowo a larger role in economic decisions than is traditional. Prabowo--who reportedly wanted to be a VP with "prime ministerial-like" responsibilities--was said to be disgruntled with the agreement even after he agreed to it.

15. (C) Neither Megawati nor Prabowo could meet the mandated threshold of voter support on their own to run without the other's party and, as strange political bedfellows, decided to run together. The PDI-P/Gerindra coalition includes six or seven small parties. (Note: PDI-P linked up with Gerindra after talks of a PDI-P coalition with PD failed.)

#### YUDHOYONO IN THE LEAD

16. (C) Yudhoyono is way ahead in the polls at this point, though it is still early in the race. Some observers believe he can win the first round outright by receiving the 50%-plus support needed. If neither he nor the other tickets achieve that figure, there will be a second round in September

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pitting the top two July finishers.

17. (C) Separately, the Election Commission, chastened by criticism over discrepancies and possible manipulation of the voter lists, is determined to improve its performance for this election. It has re-opened the voter registration list until May 31, allowing citizens to ensure that their names are on the list. The official campaign season begins mid-June and ends July 5.

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